

Getting Research into Practice (GRIP)

A resource for local authorities in planning healthier places

Resource Example 2: Developing a Healthy Planning Principles Framework for North Yorkshire County Council, the City of York and East Riding of Yorkshire Councils

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What is the purpose of this resource?

This resource is a supplement to *Getting Research into Practice (GRIP) – a resource for local authorities in planning healthier places*. It is intended to help planners in England develop their own assessment frameworks to support the creation of healthier environments. The resource draws on discussions at a workshop held with North Yorkshire County Council, the City of York and East Riding of Yorkshire Councils. With significant housing growth planned across the Yorkshire region in both urban and rural areas, a region-wide Healthy Planning Principles Framework could help direct best practice in designing healthier environments for all councils when plan-making and decision-taking. Local information relating specifically to York, North Yorkshire and East Riding is outlined in green. Other areas can use this resource by replacing it with their own data.

What is a Healthy Planning Principles Framework?

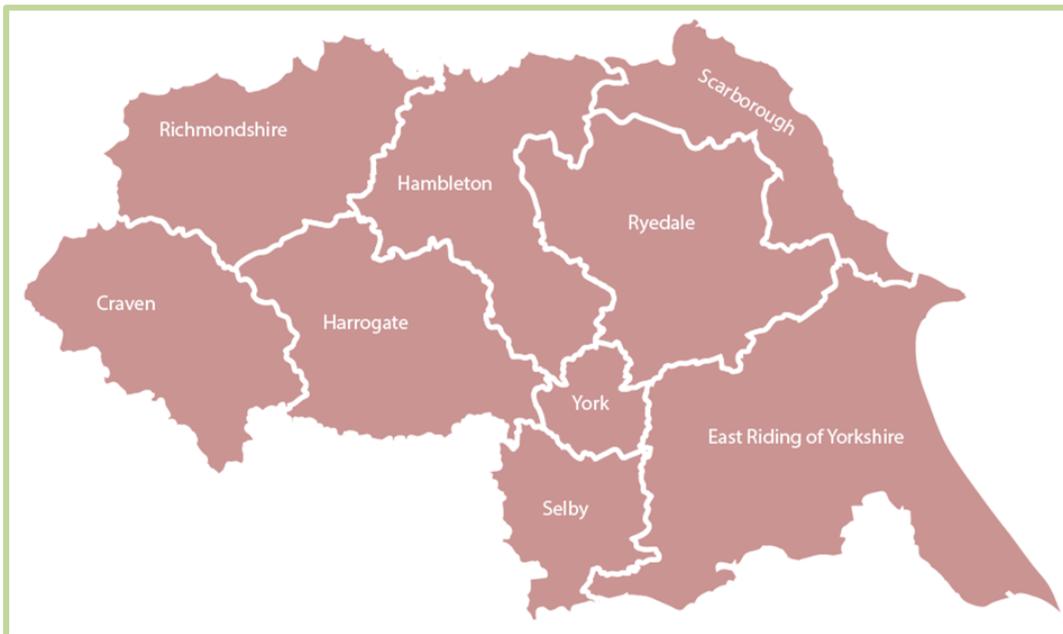
A Healthy Planning Principles Framework would fall under the category of an ‘assessment framework’ as stipulated by the NPPG (1). Local planning authorities can develop and use their own assessment frameworks which set out a criterion against which the design of development proposals can be assessed. They can cover a range of issues that are important for securing well-designed places or focus on particular considerations, such as health and wellbeing. Frameworks are particularly effective when the issues within them are considered in relation to the particular context of a local area – in this case local health and wellbeing outcomes. Authorities may wish to refer to the use of specific frameworks in their planning policies or SPDs. It is important to ensure that they do not conflict with other local planning policies or national policy.

Duty to Cooperate

The development of a cross-boundary Healthy Planning Principles Framework can be an effective way of meeting requirements under duty to cooperate, as well as planning positively for health and wellbeing across a wider area. Planners and colleagues in the healthcare system, such as the Primary Care Networks and Integrated Care Systems and Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) can collaborate to create a shared vision and priorities for local health and wellbeing. The duty to cooperate places a legal duty on local planning authorities and county councils in England, and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters. Statements of common ground between local authorities could therefore include the joint development of a Healthy Planning Principles Framework.

There are multiple councils that could be involved in the development of a Healthy Planning Principles Framework in the Yorkshire region including: City of York Council, North Yorkshire County Council (which includes seven districts) and East Riding of Yorkshire Council (YNYER). Statements of common ground should be prepared between these local authorities, and ideally, their colleagues in the NHS or STP, to ensure clear and consistent collaboration. Figure 1 below identifies those local authorities involved:

Figure 1: Map of local authorities involved (YNYER)



National policy drivers

The national policy drivers for using planning powers to create healthier environments are outlined in Chapter 2 (Background), which includes national planning policy and national health policy. These national policy drivers should be identified at the beginning of a Healthy Planning Principles Framework to demonstrate the links between the built environment with health and wellbeing and to justify its implementation.

Local policy drivers

Local policy context is needed to justify the implementation of a Healthy Planning Principles Framework. These local policy drivers can include growth identified in Local Plans, health priorities identified in Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies (JHWS) and other initiatives such as Local Industrial Strategies.

Local Plans provide a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. The significant amount of housing growth often outlined in Local Plans provides both a challenge and opportunity for local planning authorities. Not only should new development be shaped positively to create a healthy environment for its residents, but development should also seek ways to reduce any health inequalities in the existing area.

The significant amount of growth proposed in the YNYER councils needs a clear direction towards creating healthier environments. The region has many different Local Plans being prepared and therefore a common Healthy Planning Principles Framework across the area will help provide coherence in policymaking and implementation. It is important to remember that

within the Yorkshire region there are differences between the needs of urban and rural communities. Therefore, the Framework must be sensitive in its principles and recommendations to ensure they are suitable for all areas.

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies (JHWSs) are based on the priorities identified in the JSNA. Using evidence in the JHWS can be useful in helping to meet the evidence base requirements in the NPPF under health and wellbeing.

The North Yorkshire JHWS identifies that the area has a growing elderly population which means there are more demands on the health and care systems than in the past and there are widening variations in obesity between children living in affluent and deprived neighbourhoods. Life expectancy for men living in Scarborough, for example, can vary by as much as 11 years between the richest and poorest areas of the district. These are similar outcomes for the YNYER councils.

Local Industrial Strategies: Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are business led partnerships between local authorities and local private sector businesses. They play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and job creation, improving infrastructure and raising workforce skills within the local area. LEPs oversee developing Local Industrial Strategies to address the productivity challenge and set out long term priorities for their area. These strategies often recognise the importance of healthy and happy communities which contribute to economic growth. Aligning a Healthy Planning Principles Framework with the Local Industrial Strategy can strengthen the message of delivering healthier environments.

The draft Local Industrial Strategy for the YNYER councils identifies investing in places and communities as a key priority. The strategy recognises that connected, healthy and inclusive communities can contribute to and benefit from economic growth. The LEP covers the YNYER area and therefore aligning a Healthy Planning Principles Framework with the Local Industrial Strategy can help ensure consistent delivery and implementation of the Framework across the different local planning authorities.

Local health evidence sources: the sources of evidence presented here are useful in helping to meet the evidence base requirement in the NPPF under health and wellbeing. Specific links are included for North Yorkshire County Council, the City of York and East Riding of Yorkshire Councils:

- [City of York – Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022](#)
- [North Yorkshire - Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2020](#)
- [East Riding Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2022](#)
- Public Health Frameworks and tools – the frameworks and tools identified in Chapter 2 (Background) can be used to identify local health needs and issues specific to City of York Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council and local authorities in North Yorkshire County Council.

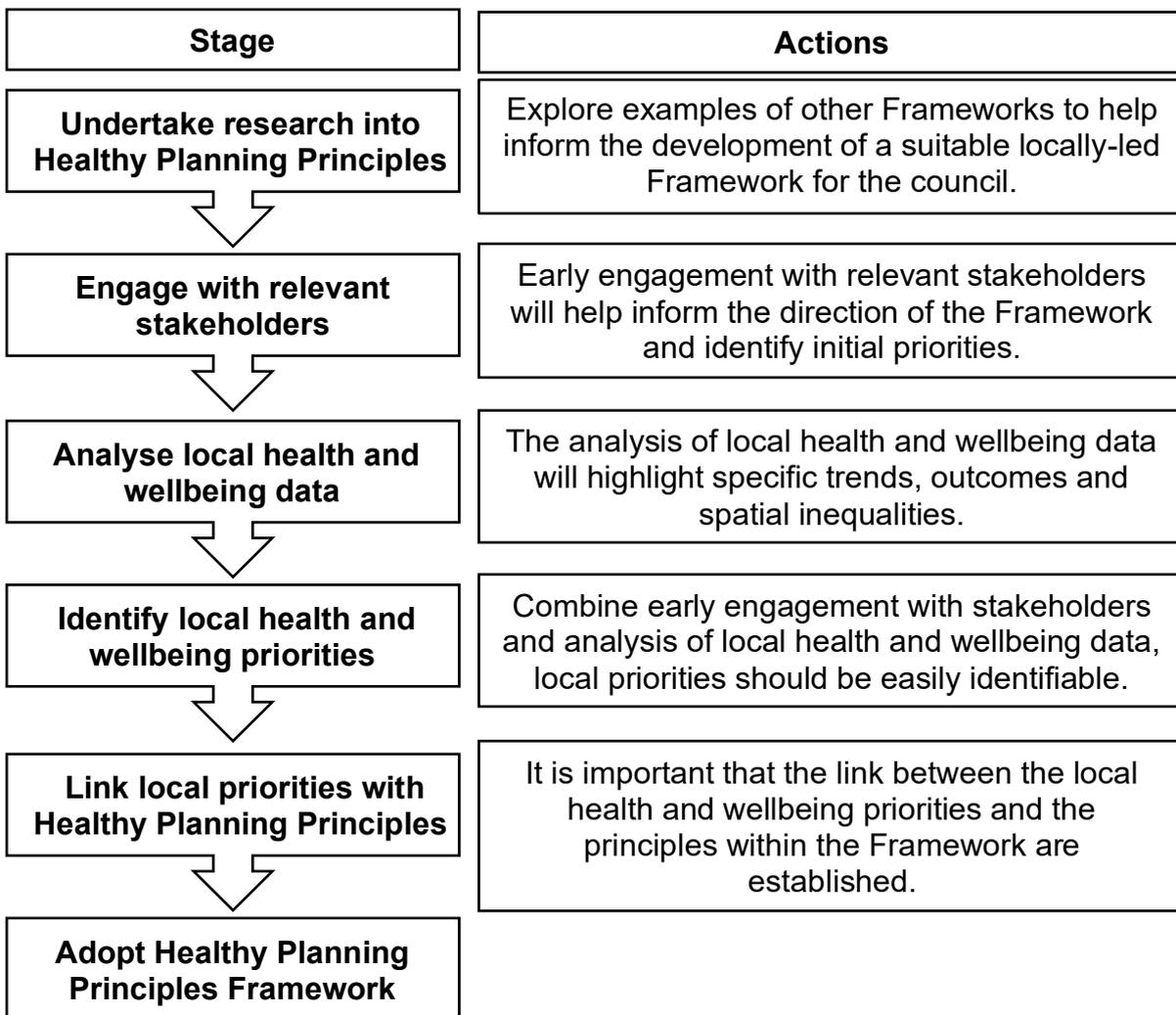
Why would councils benefit from a Healthy Places SPD?

A Healthy Planning Principles Framework would improve the delivery of developments that support healthier communities and contribute to the duty to co-operate.

The 'how to' process

A Healthy Planning Principles Framework should be developed following research of the existing evidence base that demonstrates the links between the built environment with health and wellbeing and draw on several source materials. Health and wellbeing evidence should be used to justify each principle and the requirements. Figure 2 below shows the 'how to' process.

Figure 2: Developing a Healthy Planning Principles Framework



Engaging with stakeholders

The principles and recommendations set out in a Healthy Planning Principles Framework should be developed in partnership with a variety of stakeholders from different council departments and organisations. This includes planning, public health, elected members and community groups. Please refer to 'Annex 3: Planning and health stakeholders' in the introductory report which identifies relevant stakeholders.

Identifying the Healthy Planning Principles

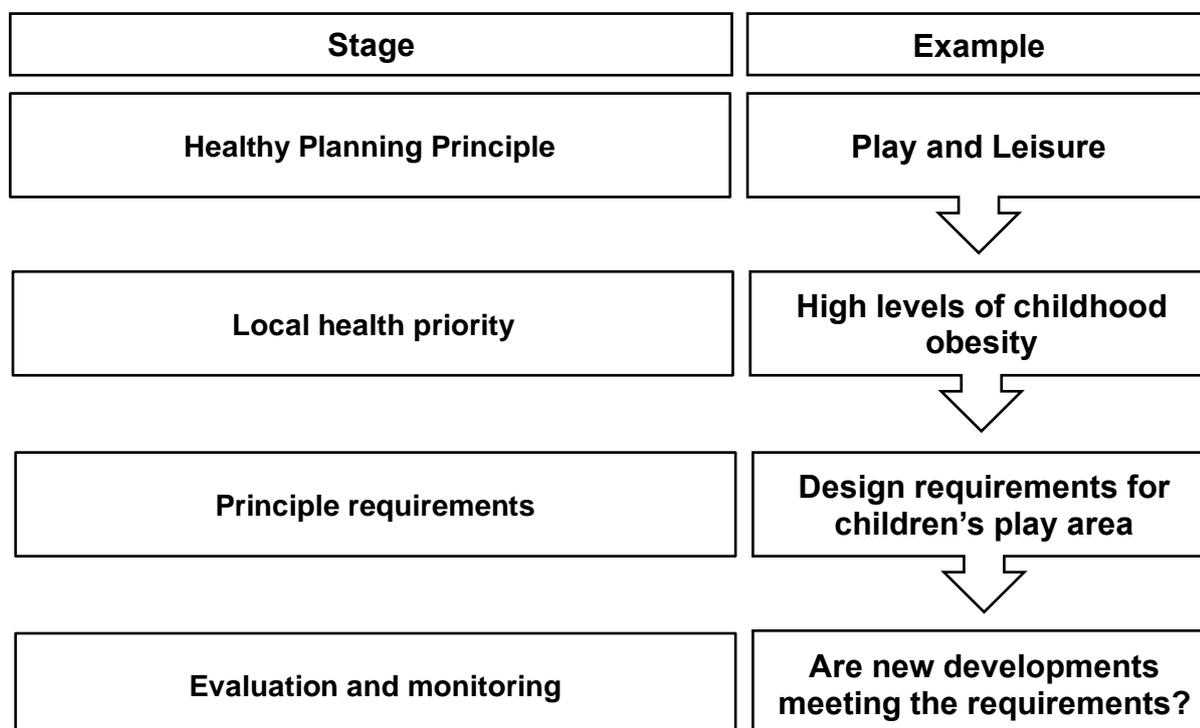
A Healthy Planning Principles Framework should be developed following research of the existing evidence base that demonstrates the links between the built environment with health and wellbeing and draw on several source materials. A set of principles and recommendations should be presented within the Framework with a summary of existing policy and guidance. Cross referencing within each principle provides an integrated basis for further policy development and to inform planning decisions. In addition, cross referencing demonstrates the connections between complementary or occasionally conflicting policy priorities.

The Healthy New Towns principles developed by NHS England with Public Health England, the Town and Country Planning Association, The King's Fund and The Young Foundation published in September 2019, provide a useful foundation for local authorities developing their own principles. These are:

- Plan ahead collectively
- Integrated health and community services
- People and communities
- Compact neighbourhoods
- Active travel
- Healthy eating and food
- Homes and buildings
- Play and leisure
- Natural environment.

A Healthy Planning Principles Framework should clearly set out what is expected from developments based on each principle. Visual examples of best practice could be included to better inform developers of the desired outcome. Indicators and delivery mechanisms should be associated with each principle in order to ensure effective implementation of the Framework. It is important that the principles within the Framework are linked to specific local health priorities. Figure 3 shows the logic using the example of 'Play and Leisure':

Figure 3: Linking principles to health priorities



Using the Healthy Planning Principles Framework

For local planning authorities' policy makers and decision-takers, the Framework should guide the assessment of planning applications for developments coming forward within the local area within the suite of associated local policy documents. For developers and landowners as prospective planning applicants, the Framework will guide the pre-application planning and design of masterplans or infrastructure and ensure co-ordinated and integrated consideration of health and wellbeing issues. For local authority public health teams, as consultees and commissioners, the Framework will help implement priorities set out in local health and wellbeing strategies. For healthcare commissioners and providers, the Framework will guide considerations for identifying and allocating health care services and infrastructure in alignment with wider activities to support the prevention of ill health.

Checklist

A checklist to assist with assessment of developments based on the Healthy Planning Principles should be included in the Framework. This could take a RAG (red / amber / green) approach when used against each of the proposed indicators and considerations. Table 1 below is an example of a checklist:

- RED** indicates lack of compliance/ consideration
- AMBER** indicates limited level of compliance/ consideration
- GREEN** indicates evidenced compliance/ consideration

Table 1: Example checklist

Healthy Planning Principle	Requirements
Plan ahead collectively	Development supports the delivery of health and care priorities as set out in the Healthy Planning Principles Framework, Local Health and Wellbeing Strategies, or otherwise highlighted by public health evidence and placemaking priorities?
Integrated health and community services	Consulted with local people to understand their health needs and barriers to accessing current health and care provision and involve them in to co-designing new provision?
People and communities	Current and new residents actively involved in the planning process from the earliest stages, including those from sections of society that are often marginalised e.g. young people and unemployed?
Compact neighbourhoods	Locate wide range of amenities in well-connected neighbourhood centres close to homes?
Active travel	Designed so that active travel is the easiest and most attractive option; needs of pedestrians and cyclists prioritised over those of vehicles?
Healthy eating and food	Include allotments and community gardens that are easily accessible from homes and spaces for fresh food markets?
Homes and buildings	Buildings to be located close to public transport / active transport networks, and neighbourhood facilities including green spaces, and have bike storage and EV charging points?
Play and leisure	Places and spaces for people of all ages and abilities to take part in informal and formal play and leisure activities?
Natural environment	Protect and enhances existing natural assets while creating new green infrastructure networks?

Useful links

The following links provide useful examples of frameworks and guidance related to Healthy Planning Principles from other local authorities:

- [Healthy New Towns Darlington: Design Principles – Evidence and Practice Guide \(September 2018\)](#)
- [Hertfordshire’s Health and Wellbeing Planning Guidance \(May 2017\)](#)
- [Local Government Association - Developing Healthier Places](#)
- [London Healthy Urban Development Unit – Healthy Urban Planning Checklist](#)
- [The Essex Design Guide](#)
- [Harlow and Gilston Garden Town – Design Guide](#)

References

(1) NPPG Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 26-018-2019100 (2019)

